

REMARKS

Receipt of the Office Action of June 10, 2009 is gratefully acknowledged.

The objection to the specification is respectfully traversed. In the objection, the examiner states: "...where in the specification there are no guidelines or section headings that distinguish different parts of the specification." In fact the specification does include appropriate headings, which were inserted by the PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT filed on April 26, 2007. Accordingly, this objection should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claim 20 under 35 USC 101 has been rendered moot in view of the cancellation of claim 20.

The rejection of claims 19 and 20 under 35 USC 102(b) by Packwood et al has also been rendered moot by the cancellation of claims 19 and 20.

The rejection of claims 11 - 14 and 16 under 35 USC 103(a) over Packwood et al in view of Keyghobad et al; the rejection of claims 15 and 17 under 35 USC 103(a) over Packwood et al in view of Keyghobad et al and Fite; and the rejection of claim 18 under 35 USC 103(a) over Packwood et al in view of Keyghobad et al and Westfield et al are noted.

The converter unit (e.g Tank Side Monitor of the Firm Endress & Hauser) is a supervisory control and data acquisition interface for tank or process monitoring. In operation it is connected to the field devices, as transmitters, sensors and actuators, and to a remote control room. The converter unit is connected to the control room via communication module and a signal line SL supporting one of various industry standard communication protocols (Whessoematic WM550, Varec Mark/Space, Sakura Vi , Tiway etc.). The tank side monitor is connected to the field devices via accordingly designed terminals using applicable standards, e.g. the HART, Profibus or Fieldbus

Foundation bus. These communication standards are different from the standards used for the communication of the system to the remote control room, because of the different communication standards used on the various communication paths. Please refer to page 1 of the specification, wherein it is stated: "Especially in the case of tank farms, refineries, pipelines, etc., long signal lines of multiple kilometers are needed, in order to connect the individual process components with the control room. The transmission standards (HART, Profibus, Foundation Fieldbus) known in the field of process automation technology are not suited, or are only conditionally suited, for such long signal paths. Therefore, often used in the case of existing tank farms are various communication systems (communication protocols, or communication technologies), such as, e.g. Whessoematic WM550, Varec Mark/Space, Sakura Vi, Tiway, etc., which are especially adapted for data transmission over relatively long signal lines."

In an effort to place this application in condition for allowance, claim 11 has been amended to include the subject matter of claims 12 and 13 and to further recite that a plurality of sensors are connected to a plurality of converter units via 2-wire lines and that a signal line leads from the converter units to the control room. These further distinctions are believed to distinguish the present invention over the art of record.

In regard to the prior art, the examiner has correctly noted that Packwood et al is the closest reference. It too, however, falls short of the present invention as it is now defined. Packwood et al disclose "a multi-protocol smart field device which uses a Fieldbus communication protocol to communicate process control information and uses a HART communication protocol to enable local configuration of the field device via a hand-held HART communicator. The multi-protocol smart field device includes a first communications interface communicatively coupled to a digital data bus that is adapted to process HART communications which are received from and which are sent to a HART hand-held communicator. The multi-protocol smart field device further includes a second communications interface communicatively coupled to the digital data bus that is adapted to process Fieldbus communications. Additionally, the multi-protocol smart field device includes a first filter coupled between the first communications interface and the digital data bus that substantially attenuates signals having frequencies associated

with Fieldbus communications and a second filter coupled between the second communications interface and the digital data bus that substantially attenuates signals having frequencies associated with HART communications."

The invention as defined in claims 11 and 15 - 18, is now believed to patentably distinguish over the art of record, and in particular Packwood et al.

Respectfully submitted,
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